

and Societies registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 for social, religious, cultural and educational activities.

As per the current procedure, the allotment of land to such institutions is based on the recommendations of a Screening Committee duly constituted by the Ministry to examine and screen the applications in terms of their eligibility for allotment.

Detailed guidelines have also been issued prescribing norms to scrutinize/process the applications and to screen the requests for allotment of land by the Land & Development Office.

No recommendation for allotment of land for private institutions/individual was made by the Screening Committee for the year 2004-05 and 2005-06 due to scarcity of land available for allotment and non-fulfillment of the norms, etc. Hence, no land was allotted by the Land & Development Office for private institutions/individuals during the year 2004-05 and 2005-06.

In so far the Delhi Development Authority is concerned, in addition to allotments to Government bodies, land is allotted to Societies for religious and residual categories subject to fulfillment of criteria prescribed for the purpose at zonal variant rates. Land for other categories of institutions is disposed of through auction. During 2004-05 and 2005-06, land measuring 400 Sq. mt. was allotted to only one society for religious purpose.

Efforts for being a Super Power

†*235. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that China is trying to increase its influence of being a super power on African countries while India is far behind in its efforts of being a super power in the economic and other fields; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government on the action to be taken in this direction during the coming years?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Government is aware of recent developments in China's relations with Africa. India's multifaceted and friendly relations with Africa are also growing steadily and Government attaches great importance to strengthening these traditional ties. India's role in supporting Africa during its fight against apartheid and colonialism, her technical assistance and capacity building programmes, and her contributions to

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

the maintenance of peace and security on the continent are widely acknowledged. Initiatives taken by Government in recent years include, *inter alia*, India's support and contribution to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the TEAM-9 initiative for development of relations with West Africa, the strengthening of technical assistance and capacity building programmes, extension of lines of credit, the Pan African e-Network Project and the CII Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership. India has also promoted high-level exchanges with Africa and enhanced cooperation with regional groupings in the continent. These initiatives have not only reinforced India's relations with Africa but also contributed significantly to the continent's progress and development.

Allotment of Raneri Lignite block, Bikaner, Rajasthan

*236. SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allotted Raneri Lignite block of Bikaner district to Rajasthan State Mines and Minerals Ltd. (RSMM) and withdrawn the allotment as per suggestion of NLC;

(b) if so, the scheme of NLC to develop this block and by when; and

(c) whether Government would allot this block again to RSMM and if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) Raneri Lignite Block was allocated in favour of Rajasthan State Mineral Development Corporation Limited (RSMDC) on 1.07.2002. Subsequently, Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited (NLC) had informed that the company would require this block for the purpose of power generation through the route of underground gasification. The Government after considering the request of NLC decided to withdraw allotment of this block from RSMDC.

(b) NLC had submitted a proposal on 'Underground Coal Gasification and its utilization for power generation studies in lignite deposits of Rajasthan' which envisaged an expenditure of Rs. 11.25 crore. This scheme is to be funded jointly by the Ministry of Coal, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India and NLC. The Government had sanctioned the scheme on 8.8.2005 and it is expected to be completed within four years from the date of sanction.

(c) At present there is no such proposal under the consideration of the Government.